WHIRRAKEE

August 2000

Vol. 21 No. 7

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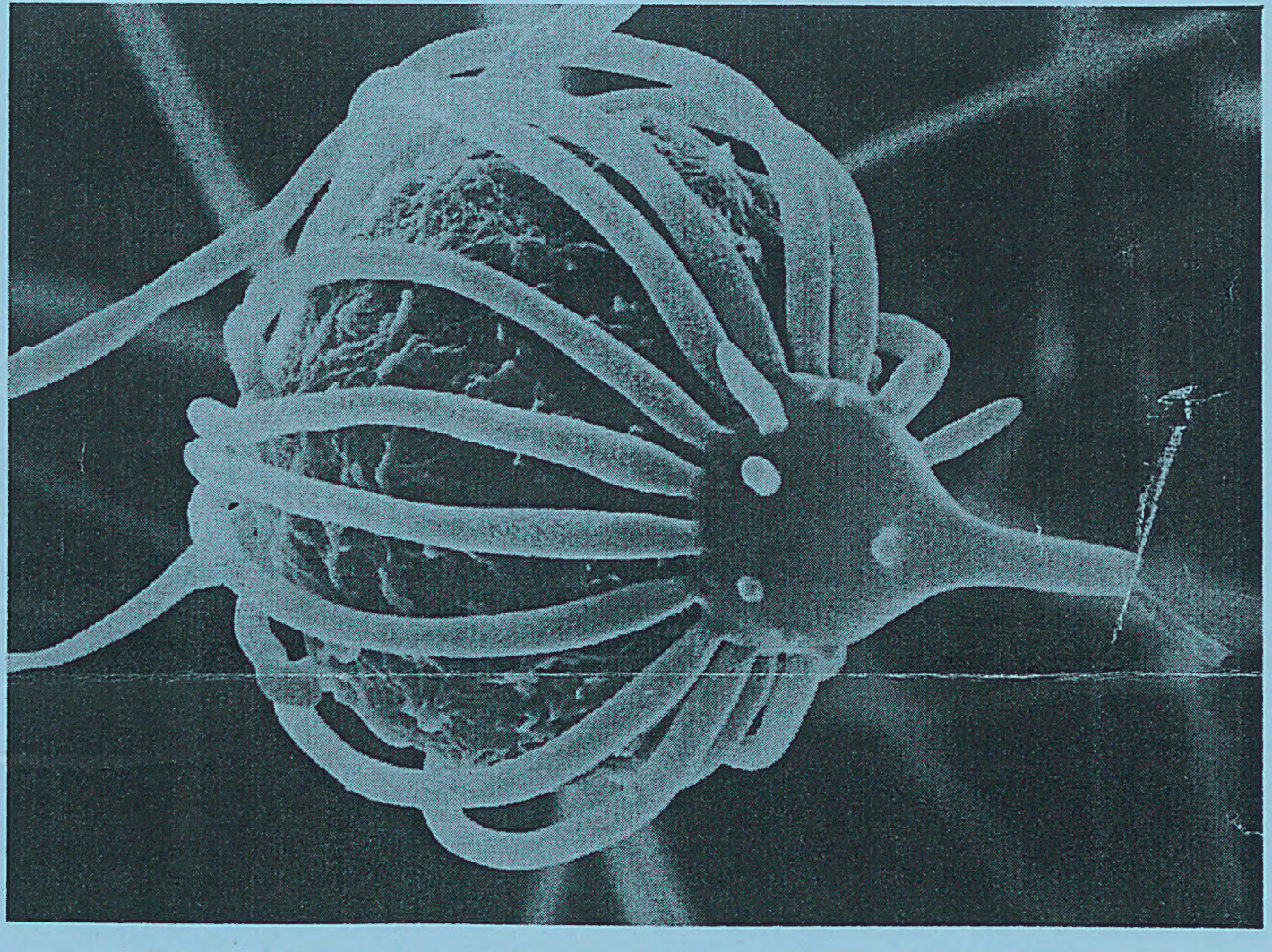

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552

Office Bearers for 1999 - 2000

President	Rod Orr	2 Cockerel Court, Bendigo	5443 5668
Senior Vice President	Barbara Chmielewska	Melaleuca Ave, Longlea	5439 3075
Junior Vice President	Matthew Comer		
Secretary	Anne Bridley	39 Cootamundra Place, Junortoun	5449 3479
Minute Secretary	not filled yet		
Treasurer	Glenise Moors	Mandurang South Rd. Sedgwick	5439 6254
Membership Officer	Kate Lottkowitz	80 Piccaninny Rd, RSD Strathfieldsaye	5439 3157
Excursion organiser	done by the committee		
Syllabus organiser	Bill Holsworth	13 Nabilla Crs, Bendigo	5443 4063
Librarian	Diana Collier	31 Milroy Street, Bendigo	5443 0137
Whirrakee contacts	Tom Burton	Tannery Lane, Mandurang	5439 3028
	Sabine Wilkens	82 Somerville Street, Bendigo	5443 2797
		e-mail: s.wilkens@bendigo.latrobe.edu.au	

Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The new subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34. These rates will apply from 1st of September 2000 and they will include GST.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. Meetings start at 7:30pm and conclude with supper. The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearers listed above, together with the following members:
J. Cleary, D Collier; W N Holsworth; M Lewis; K Lottkowitz; R Moors; S Pelczinski; M Stone.

Excursions The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. Full-day excursions normally commence at 10am (usually on a Sunday); half-day excursions normally commence at 2pm and may be either on a Saturday or Sunday. Full-day or half-day excursions are usually held on the weekend following the General Meeting. Campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has 2 active sub-groups:

Bird Observers Group: meets on the first Friday of the month, at 7:30pm. The venue for meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

President: Anne Bridley
Secretary: Jane Cleary

Mammal Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Front Cover: Photographer: Robert Seviour

Here is another Scanning Electron Microscope image of a beautiful structure that most people never lay eyes on. It is a zygospore of the fungus *Absidia spinosa* (a zygospore is a resting or resistant spore which results from sexual reproduction in the fungal division Zygomycotina). The whole bird-cage like structure is about 100µm across and belongs to the fungus *Absidia spinosa*.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club
Vol. 21, No. 7, August 2000

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles.
Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editors' Note
If you already looked at the VFNCA Campout details in the last issue, please look again. This version printed here is an updated one and the registration prices include the G.S.T. Full payment is required by September 15. For details see page 12. Although we had a very interesting speaker for the July general meeting and a record crowd in attendance, there was no room in this month's edition to report on the talk. Some other items also missed out, e.g. the advertisement for the Holsworth Wildlife Research fund. Application for this fund, which aids postgraduate students in research in ecology, wildlife management and natural history. Applications will close at the end of September. If this interests to you, please wait until the next Whirrakee or else, contact the editor and a copy of the application form will be posted to you. Finally, one last appeal for submissions in response to the Box-Ironbark draft recommendations. Submissions close on the 8th August. If you have any concerns, a simple letter will do.

Spring in the Bendigo Bush and Wildflower Show

"Spring in the Bendigo Bush" starts on the 1st of September and continues until mid-October For details of the program please refer to the Calendar leaflet included in this edition of *Whirrakee*. The following events are sponsored by the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club or are co-sponsored as indicated:

1. **The Night Sky of the Boorong** - presented by John Morrison
   Co-sponsored with the Aboriginal Tertiary Support Unit, La Trobe University, Bendigo.
   Date: Wednesday 6th September, 2000
   Time: 7:30 pm
   Venue: Senior Citizens Club Rooms - Old High Street, Golden Square

2. **Beauty of Nature** - an exhibition of water colour and acrylic paintings of predominantly Australian native birds by Kunchana, a young Sri Lankan artist studying at present at La Trobe University, Bendigo.
   Venue: Potters Restaurant, Bendigo Pottery, Midland Highway, Epsom.
   Dates and Times: 1st to 18th September, 2000, 10 am – 4 pm
   Opening Night: Thursday 31st of August, 6 pm.
   Tea and Coffee will be provided. Snacks will have to be purchased.

3. **Wildflower Show** Co-sponsored by the Bendigo Native Plant Group
   Date: Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd September, 2000
   Time: 10 am to 4 pm
   Venue: Senior Citizens Club Rooms, Old High Street, Golden Square

BENDIGO - HEART OF THE BOX-IRONBARK COUNTRY

WILDFLOWER SHOW

PRESENTED BY THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB & BENDIGO NATIVE PLANT GROUP AS PART OF THE "SPRING IN THE BENDIGO BUSH" PROGRAM

ENTRY BY
GOLD COIN DONATION

SENIOR CITIZENS CLUB ROOMS
OLD HIGH ST. GOLDEN SQUARE

10 am - 4pm
2nd & 3rd SEPTEMBER

WILDFLOWER SHOW TO BE OPENED BY LOCAL GARDENING EDITOR / RADIO PRESENTER:

ROSEMARY DAVIES

11am SATURDAY
2nd SEPTEMBER 2000

COME & DISCOVER OUR BEAUTIFUL NATIVE FLORA

- ADVICE & INFORMATION
- INDIGENOUS GARDEN
- FLOWER DISPLAY
- PLANT SALES

ALSO

LOOK OUT FOR OTHER "SPRING IN THE BENDIGO BUSH" ACTIVITIES IN SEPTEMBER

ENQUIRIES

phone Sally at (03) 54 353 877
or 0409 543 538

BOX-IRONBARK NATIONAL PARKS AND CONSERVATION RESERVES

YOUR GUIDE TO HAVING A SAY ON THE ECC RECOMMENDATIONS

The Environment Conservation Council's Box-Ironbark *draft recommendations* were released on May 30. The ECC will be taking submissions from the public up until August 8, 2000.

This is a very important process. People wishing to have their say can write a submission to the ECC based on this guide. Address it to:

Executive Officer
Environment Conservation Council
3/250 Victoria Parade
East Melbourne 3002

They may be emailed to:
ECC2@nre.vic.gov.au

GO TO IT!

JOBSJOBSJOBSJOBSJOBSJOBS

Economic modelling on the impact of the draft recommendations suggests that the benefits will outweigh any negatives, in terms of economic cost/benefit ratio and on employment figures.

Few or even no actual jobs would be lost - but a theoretical increase in future ones through projected expansion of various industries. 85 jobs through new nature -based tourism opportunities are expected to be created.

The net economic benefit of these recommendations is in the order of $1.1 million, not counting biodiversity benefits.

WHY PROTECT BOX-IRONBARK FORESTS?

Box Ironbark is the least protected major forest type in Victoria, with only 3% of its original extent in secure parks. Hundreds of rare or threatened species occur in these forests, and given this woeful level of protection, many are disappearing from places where they were once common. Parks, which exclude extractive industries, are the answer.

WHAT HAS THE ECC RECOMMENDED?

The ECC has recommended new conservation reserves, but it only raises the fully protected percentage to 6% - still insufficient, and therefore unacceptable. At the same time, it has recommended that all existing extractive industries continue. Therefore there are many very important areas left in state forests – open to the ravages of mining, logging and other damaging uses.

National Parks - fully protected (38,226h). The best proposals are to take significant areas of Mt Pilot Multi-use Park and from state forest at Barambogie, to create the Chiltern-Pilot National Park. The existing Kara Kara State Park is to be enlarged to create the St Arnaud Range National Park.

State Parks - fully protected (46,091 ha). The ECC recommends new or expanded State Parks at Kooyoora, Whipstick-Kamarooka, Mt Black, Broken-Boosey Creeks and Warby Range, adding to the existing and largely unchanged Paddy's Ranges and Reef Hills State Parks.

Other Reserves - open to industry. New Regional Parks are slated for Bendigo, Castlemaine, St Arnaud and Heathcote, with an expansion of the existing Ararat Regional Park. There are sixty three new or expanded Nature Conservation Reserves recommended.

Industry - Overall, beekeeping is to be allowed wherever it previously existed, even in National Parks (100% of its former area). Eucalyptus oil harvesting is to be allowed in 84% of its former area, prospecting 91%, mining 87% and logging/firewood collecting 58%. All unacceptable – conservation is being squeezed in around these uses.

Disappointingly, 121,738 ha will remain as state forest, by far the largest land use category. Despite the extremely threatened nature of the ecosystem, all this land will remain open to logging, firewood collection, mining, prospecting and eucalyptus oil extraction. This is a deplorable outcome. DNRE's Forest Service modelling, which suggests Box-Ironbark Woodlands have been undercut previously, has been used by the ECC to recommend that the same quantities can be taken from the reduced area - putting even more pressure on the remaining forests.

WRITE, WRITE, WRITE!

You can help enormously by writing to the ECC. Be polite, passionate and to the point. Congratulate them on the good recommendations, but point out the faults. Demonstrate your love of the forests but also your understanding of the issues. Put forward your alternative vision - for either the ecosystem as a whole or specific parts of it that are of particular concern/knowledge to you. This is only a sketch of what we will be demanding of the ECC, so call us for the full submission. But whether it's half a page or 100 pages, it will have an effect. Your submission will play a critical role in ensuring that the ECC lifts their game for their final report to government. ***Thank you.***

WHAT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR ECC SUBMISSION

- All Box-Ironbark forests are very valuable.
- Geographically, conservation has only been given fragments of the little that remain while industry has been allowed to continue on its destructive way.
- The recommendations for new and expanded national and state parks are highly supported, but we need more.
- There is no vision being elucidated. The ECC has taken a snapshot of the ecosystem as it is, which includes unsustainable industries, and has shuffled those elements around, rather than working towards a bold conservation goal.
- There are no biodiversity targets. How have they ensured that species will exist and be thriving 10,100 or 1000 years from now? Can they point to ecologists who say the recommendations go far enough?
- The forest between Rushworth and Heathcote should be the location for a large, consolidated, flagship Box-Ironbark National Park, joining Mt Black State Park, Whroo NCR and Mt Ida NCR. Mention the area's winery investment, and making the most of attractions like Waranga Basin and the hidden value of the attractive town of Rushworth.
- The people of Bendigo came up with a visionary concept called the Greater Bendigo National Park, which the ECC has ignored. Without National Park status, there will be less protection of the highly significant values, and fewer visitors will be attracted to the area. The fragmentation of the park, and the two different park categories will hamper conservation and promotion efforts. Key areas (such as Wellsford Forest and the area west of the Whipstick State Park) have been left out. These areas should be added to a Greater Bendigo National Park.
- Areas to the South of Castlemaine should be included in a Castlemaine National Park.
- Areas adjoining the proposed St Arnaud National Park, but of interest to prospectors/miners have been left out and recommended as Nature Conservation Reserves instead. They should be incorporated into the park.
- Areas adjoining Paddy's Ranges State Park at Maryborough but not included, should be added.
- A Wychitella State Park that includes the eucalyptus oil area southwest of Wedderburn is essential to protect the only remaining Box-Ironbark Malleefowl populations.
- Waanyarra Nature Conservation Reserve, north of Dunolly, is a large area that needs to be protected from fly-by-night miners as Waanyarra State Park.
- The proposed Warby Range State Park, including the Killawarra forest should be made into a national park.
- Kingower forest near Ingelwood is a key site for Swift Parrots, Painted Honeyeaters, and many other plants and animals. These species should be protected by the addition of this area to the proposed Kooyoora State Park, together with eucalyptus oil harvesting areas north of the existing park, to form Kooyoora National Park.
- Logging and mining have decimated Box-Ironbark forests, reducing the number of large trees from around 30 per hectare to about two. The ECC has done nothing to ensure that any medium sized trees will be allowed to grow into large trees. Instead, virtually all of these trees will be cut down. Demand that the six largest trees in every hectare be <u>permanently</u> protected from logging and allowed to grow into precious habitat trees.
- DNRE's Forests Service and the loggers they oversee will still be operating under the same insufficient regulations. There must be better regulations that ensure important biodiversity outcomes.
- VNPA has shown that firewood plantations are viable, but a barrier to investment is continued access to precious Box- Ironbark woodlands. The ECC should plan a 5 to 10 year phase-out of the industry from public land, in order to stimulate economic benefits from agroforestry. Similar scenarios could be achieved for eucalyptus oil and fencepost plantations.
- Tourism, the second-biggest industry in the study area, has been given little specific help, as the ECC tries to preserve existing industries.
- There is no alternative economic modelling for other scenarios such as the benefits of a Greater Bendigo NP.
- Many vulnerable Ecological Vegetation Classes are under-represented in the recommended reserve system. The ecosystem has already been cleared and otherwise damaged to a massive degree, yet the ECC still seeks 'balance' by enshrining the very land uses (mining and logging principally) that have caused this state of affairs.
- Scant recognition of aboriginal heritage has been made.

Ask the ECC to address these issues. They should ensure they do so in their final report to government.

Prepared by Jason Doyle, Woodlands Campaigner
Victorian National Parks Association. 10 Parliament Place, East Melbourne 3002
Contact Jason at jasond@vnpa.org.au or telephone 03) 9650 8296.

Bird Observations around Bendigo
Author: Maurie Lewis

Date: 23/6/2000
Location: Bath Lane, Kangaroo Flat
Blue Faced Honeyeaters
Purple-crowned Lorikeets (10)
Musk Lorikeets (≈ 40)
Noisy Miners (lots)

Date: 24/6/2000
Location: Down the Golfcourse Road to the Wellsford Forest
Noisy Friarbirds
Yellow-tufted Honeyeaters
Swift Parrots (3, flying overhead)
Noisy Miners

Date: 3/7/2000
Location: John Burtonclay's Place
Eastern Spinebill (1 male, black head)
Currawongs (> 20, on grapes)
Fairy Wrens

Date: 3/7/2000
Location: Arnold Street (at the Hospital)
White-plumed Honeyeaters (5)

Date: 3/7/2000
Location: Vain Street (at M. Lewis's Place)
Whistling Kite
Red-rumped Parrots (6)

Date: 10/7/2000
Location: Faugh-a-Ballaugh Flora Reserve
Striated Pardalotes
White-browed Scrubwrens
White-eared Honeyeaters
Brown Thornbill
Fairy Wrens (everywhere)

The Lerp Insects in California – The Saga Continues

Remember those River Red Gums near Los Angeles which were attacked by accidentally introduced Australian lerp insects and suddenly became unsightly and messy with sticky exudate? (not unlike our River Red Gums here...)
Jane Cleary's American friends are keeping her (and us) up-to date with the latest attempts to control this outbreak, first spotted about 2 years ago.

This story is summarised from an article by Erik Nelson in *News*, June 7, 2000 (a local Los Angeles Newspaper).

On the 7th June, 2000, for the first time in California, 100 male and 100 female parasitic Australian wasps were released in North Hollywood to hunt down and eat the Red Gum psyllid which has been attacking eucalypt trees across the state since 1998.
"We have very high hopes that this is going to take care of it" said Los Angeles Agricultural Commissioner Cato Fiksdal. "We've had releases like this of other parasites for pests in the past and they've worked quite well"
For six months, biological control expert Don Dahsten has been breeding parasitic Australian wasps at the University of California at Berkeley's Centre for Biological Control.
After watching them lay their eggs inside the larval psyllids and seeing the wasp larvae eat the psyllids from the inside out, Dahsten decided it was time to try them out in Southern California.
"It's not going to be an instant cure. It could be several weeks to several months, depending on how fast they start reproducing and how successful the program is."

An initial psyllid control program tried in May 1999 in Valley Village Park was only partially successful. Authorities released 2000 ladybugs which obediently ate the psyllids but cleared out after about two weeks.
The Park actually has several insects that eat the psyllids including the minute pirate bug, the green lacewing and the syrphid fly. However, these failed to even make a dent in the psyllid population.
It might take an Australian import (the wasp), to kill an Australian pest (the psyllid) attacking another Australian import (the eucalyptus), which has been around for about a century in California.
What will happen next? If nothing else, from our point of view, this is an interesting experiment.
I cannot help thinking that things would not move so fast in Australia. A protocol for an investigation, import and release of any new bio-control agent usually takes years from start to finish.
(Tom Burton has just returned from Mexico, excited as much by seeing the first 'perfect', insect-free eucalypts (Sugar Gums) in his life as by seeing Xantus's Hummingbirds in the Bougainvilleas nearby.)

From the Mailbag
Author: Elaine Mathison

Each month the club receives a number of newsletters and magazines: some by subscription and some in exchange for Whirrakee. These are available from the club library.

* * * * * * *

NATURE AUSTRALIA(Aust. Museum)
Winter 2000

"Striped Possums: the bold and the beautiful" by Kath Handasyde deals with probably the most striking animals of our northern rainforests. While difficult to study, perseverance has paid off, and more is now known about these beautiful creatures.

"Cane Toads vs Native Frogs" by Gordon Grigg outlines the concern over the rapid spread of cane toads through western Queensland into the Northern Territory. Solar-powered stations have been set up to monitor the advance.

"A Tree Alone" by Jonathan Majer & Harry Recher investigates the importance of single large trees and small areas of vegetation remaining in cleared countryside. Insect and bird populations were surveyed.

"Pumice Puzzles" by Lin Sutherland reports that pumice washed up on the Australian coast has often drifted thousands of kilometres from its volcanic source.

* * * * * * *

HABITAT(ACF)
June 2000

"Repairing the Country" by Tim Fisher details the progress of the alliance between the ACF and the National Farmers' Federation which ten years ago began the decade of Landcare.

"Gene Tech for Dinner - No Thanks" by Bob Phelps reports that the federal government's efforts to push genetically engineered crops and foods onto farms and our dinner tables have been stalled by public mistrust.

THE VICTORIAN NATURALIST(FNCV)
Volume 117(3) June 2000

".... Yellingbo State Nature Reserve..." by Jennie Pearce discusses the relationship between the Helmeted Honeyeater and the Mountain Swamp Gum, and the implications for management of the area.

"Cypress-pines at Terrick Terrick National Park" by David Parker & others deals with the identification of Callitris trees in this Victorian reserve. Some studies had reported two species but close examination has determined just one: Callitris glaucophylla.

"...the Anglesea Regeneration Project - How it Grew" by Margaret Wark reports on a long-term, low-cost study of the regeneration of vegetation after the 1983 wildfire. The project was carried out entirely by volunteers.

"The Six 'Lone Pines' of Jackson's Creek ..." by Robert Bender & David Akers relates the story of the propagation of seed from these Callitris trees to establish a new population in the nearby Organ Pipes National Park.

* * * * * * *

Also received recently:

*Castlemaine Naturalist(CFNC)
July 2000

*Geelong Naturalist(GFNC)
July 2000

*Newsletter(Ballarat FNC)
July 2000

*Sun-Nat(Sunraysia FNC)
July-August 2000

*Environment Victoria News
July 2000

*Tuan Talk(Box-Ironbark)
June 2000

*Australian Landcare
June 2000

*The Harrier(BOCA)
June 2000

*Field Nats News(FNCV)
July 2000

* * * * * * *

The Turtles of the Bendigo District
Part Two
The Macquarie River Turtle
(Emydura macquarii macquarii)

Author: Darren Green

The *Emydura macquarii* group currently consists of one species (*E.m.macquarii*) and five sub-species which may alter as further research unfolds. For purposes of nomenclature correctness, the species that occurs in the Bendigo region is believed to be *Emydura macquarii macquarii*. The Macquarie River Turtle *E.m.macquarii* is also known as the Murray River Turtle, Murray Short-necked Turtle or the Macquarie River Short-necked Turtle.

The Macquarie River Turtle (*E.m.macquarii)* naturally occurs throughout the length of the Murray-Darling River system, including its tributaries, from Adelaide in South Australia, throughout northern Victoria into inland New South Wales and southern Queensland. Its range is bounded by the dry western ranges known as the Flinders Ranges and the Great Dividing Range to the east. This corresponds generally to the area known as the Murray-Darling Basin. The Bendigo district populations are confined to permanent waterways, namely the Loddon and Campaspe Rivers. They are, however, found in waterways closer to Bendigo and have been observed by the author in the ponds at the Bendigo sewage farm, Lake Weeroona and Kennington Reservoir (see Figure 1). As this species is typically known only to occur in permanent waterways (ie. rivers) it is unlikely that these populations found within Bendigo City are naturally occurring, and are possibly a result of introductions.

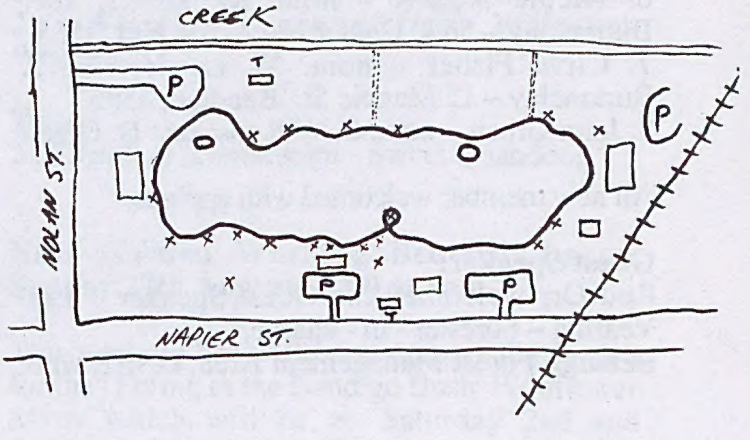
Description
Macquarie River Turtles have relatively short-necks, which is perhaps more obvious when compared to the necks of the genus *Chelodina* such as the Eastern Long-necked Turtle (*Chelodina longicollis*). Males may reach 270mm carapace (upper shell) length and are smaller than females which may attain 300mm. Males also have a noticeably longer tail than females. The carapace is an olive-brown colour, with a pale yellow/cream coloured plastron (lower shell). A pale yellow stripe extends from the mouth along the neck; some juveniles (and to a lesser extent adults) have a similar coloured dot or stripe behind the eye. Juveniles have a ridge extending down the back of the carapace which tends to flatten with age.

Reproduction
A detailed account of nesting behaviour, artificial incubation of eggs, behaviour of the female turtle prior to and during nesting, and comparative data of nesting activity, clutch sizes and incubation in southern populations of *Emydura macquarii* is made in Green (1996). A congregation of 33 individuals were observed in a small shallow section (100m2) of Lake Weeroona on 26 October 1994, where now a boardwalk is located (in the alcove close to the Boardwalk Cafe). Although mating was not observed this was an unusual occurrence at this site, and it is assumed that the congregation was for mating purposes. Based on this observation (and specimens held in captivity at the time), a gestation period from mating to egg deposition is estimated at, or narrowed down to, between 18 to 48 days in central Victoria.

Egg deposition occurs from mid-November to late December, at Lake Weeroona, usually after dark. The female Macquarie River Turtles may lay between 6 and 24 eggs, measuring 34mm x 22mm. These may take around 60 days to incubate at 29oC, or longer at lower temperatures. Hatchlings measuring around 31mm x 29mm. Eggs are deposited into a flask shaped hole dug into the ground usually within three metres of the water's edge. Popular nesting areas around Lake Weeroona are shown in diagram 1. One other site was also favourable and was located some 30 metres from the water. This site repeatedly, year after year, had nesting signs (eg. tracks leading to unfinished holes) or turtles observed depositing eggs. The substrate was river sand, making digging relatively easy, and was part of a playground located towards the Nolan Street end of the lake. Unfortunately this site is no longer there and nesting has not been observed since the boardwalk has been in place. It would be interesting to see where the turtles go to lay eggs once the "development/ improvements" have been made to this lake.

Further Reading
CANN, J. (1998) Australian Freshwater Turtles, Cann & Beaumont Publishing, Singapore.
GREEN, D. (1996) Observations of Reproduction in a Southern Population of Macquarie River Turtles, *Emydura macquarii*, A.A.H.S., Herpetofauna, 26(1):22-26.

Figure 1:
Crosses show nesting sites of the Macquarie River Turtle at Lake Weeroona in Bendigo.



Minutes of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Meeting
Held at GSSC Club rooms on Wednesday 12th July, 2000.

President Rod Orr welcomed members and visitors.
Minutes of June meeting were read and accepted on the motion of S. Wilkens,
and seconded M. Lewis

Business arising:
1. ECC's Box-Ironbark Draft Report.
a. M. Lewis reported submission send by himself and by Deborah Reef Action Group.
b. B. Culvenor reported that Jacinta Allan appreciated information and help from the community regarding the submissions and proposals.
c. B. Holsworth – Mammal Survey Group, meeting on 4th Wednesday will continue working on submissions. An appeal to the members to write in response to the ECC report.
d. S. Pelczynski - there are various publications to assist in writing submissions. Environment Victoria, Tuan Talk – these are available to members.
2. Visit by Premier and the Cabinet on Monday 17th July - Rod, Bill Jenny and Shelley will meet the Premier and Minister for Conservation to explain our concerns.

Nominations
1. Max Stevens – nom. B. Culvenor; sec. – B. Seamens - 1 Hoys St., Bendigo, 3550
2. Passed in April – Joane Smith – nom. S. Pelczynski; sec. R. Orr – 24 Cook St., Bendigo, 3550
3. Robert Jacobs – nom. M. Lewis; sec. R. Orr – 65 Carpenter St., Bendigo, 3550
4. Ros Semens - nom. B. Semens; sec. R. Orr – 35 Retreat Rd., Bendigo, 3550
5. Eric Stemmer – nom. ? Sec. R. Orr – 2 Carter St., Bendigo, 3550
6. Nicole Adams – nom. M. Lewis; sec. Burtonclay – 5690 Colder Hwy., Big Hill, 3555
7. Clive Fisher – nom. M. Lewis; sec. J. Burtonclay – 12 Magpie St., Bendigo, 3550
8. John Green – nom. S. Wilkens; sec. D. Green

All new member welcomed with applause

Guest Speaker:
Rod Orr welcomed the Guest Speaker – Les Vearing – Forester - in - charge,
Bendigo Forest Management Area, DNRE who spoke on 'Hollow Formation in Box-Ironbark Forest'. At the conclusion he was thanked by Maurie Lewis and presented with a copy of "Birds of the Bendigo District"

General Business:
1. Whirrakee, July edition to be packed for mailing after the meeting – all helpers welcome.
2. VFNCA Spring Campout at Howlong organised by Albury/Wodonga FNC – October 12-15.
3. VPNCA Committee meeting Camp. Bendigo to host with Broken Creek FNC.
4. Report on excursion to Daylesford in June to look at Fungi.
5. Keith Graham. An Owlet Nightjar, killed on the road was shown to members. A wide spread but uncommon species of note the soft feathers for silent night flight, a hollow dweller.
6. Alf Howe reported seeing 26 Crested Pigeons feeding on seeds of Liquidamber.
7. Maurie Lewis. A bird spotting excursion and BBQ on Sunday 16th July, at 10am departing Bendigo Golf Course – Golf Links Rd. – Wellsford Forest – Elmore Bush where nesting hollow trees will be looked at As well on Sunday 23rd July at 12.30 there will be tree planting.
8. Stan Pelczynski announced the forthcoming exhibition of Bird Paintings by Kunchana to be held at Potters Café Epsom, on Thursday 31st August. Request to members to assist Kunchana to find birds that might be photographed.
9. Spring in the Bendigo bush.
a. Bird Painting Exhibition – 31st August sponsored by BFNC;
b. Wildflower Show 2nd and 3rd September co-presented by BFNC and Bendigo Native Plant Group;
c. Night Sky of the Boorong 6th September, sponsored by BFNC.
10. Jane Cleary showed photograph of covers constructed over the mine shafts to provide access for bats and to ensure safety for grazing animals.
11. Barbara Chmielewska reported on Garden Working Bee on 25th of June when all plants went in. Our tasks in the garden are now completed for the year. It remains only to carry out on-going weeding. Next Working Bee will be on Sunday, 27th of August for weeding and cleaning up for the Wildflower Show 2nd and 3rd September.

Meeting Closed 10.15.

Minutes taken by Jane Cleary.

News from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Garden
Author: Barbara Chmielewska

During the working bee, on the 25th of June, 2000, we have planted 210 plants throughout the garden. Since the new area 4 was already mulched and the old areas did not require any preparation for planting, our task was made so much easier.
The plants names are listed below.

Climbers / Ramblers
2x *Billardiera cymosa* - Sweet Apple Berry
2x *Clematis microphylla* -Small-leaved Clematis
2x *Glycine clandestina* - Trailing Glycine
2x *Hardenbergia violacea* - Sarsparilla

Ground Covers
2x *Astroloma humifusum* - Cranberry Heath
2x *Brachyscome multifida* - Cut Leaf Daisy
2x *Carpobrotus modestus* - Inland Pigface
2x *Convolvulus erubescens* - Blushing Bindweed
1x *Einadia hastata* - Saloop Salt Bush
1x *Einadia nutans* - Nodding Salt Bush
1x *Enchylaena tomentosa* - Ruby Salt Bush
2x *Glycine tabacina* - Variable Glycine
1x *Goodenia blackiana* - Primrose Goodenia
2x *Hibbertia exutiacies* -Tangled Guinea Flower
4x *Pultenaea pedunculata* - Matted Bush Pea
2x *Veronica plebeia* - Trailing Speedwell

Grasses
4x *Microlaena stipoides* - Weeping Grass

Ferns, Perennial Herbs, Lilies, Rushes, Sedges & Other Tufts
4x *Arthropodium fimbriatum* - Nodding Chocolate Lily
4x *Arthropodium minus* - Small Vanilla Lily
4x *Arthropodium strictum* - Chocolate Lily
4x *Bracteantha viscosa* - Sticky Everlasting
4x *Bulbine bulbosa* - Bulbine Lily
4x *Burchardia umbellata* - Milkmaids
4x *Calocephalus citreus* - Lemon Beauty Heads
4x *Calotis cuneifolia* - Purple Burr Daisy
4x *Calotis scabiosifolia* - Rough Burr Daisy
2x *Chrysocephalum semipapposum* - Clustered Everlasting
2x *Dianella revoluta* - Flax Lily
2x *Eryngium ovinum* - Blue Devil
2x *Geranium solanderii* - Austral Crane's Bill
4x *Glischrocaryon behrii* - Golden Pennants
2x *Goodenia benthamiana* - Clasping Goodenia
4x Leptorhynchos squamatus - Scaly Buttons
4x *Leptorhynchos tenuilfolius* - Wiry Buttons
4x *Lomandra filiformis* - Wattle Mat Bush
4x *Lomandra multiflora* - Many-flowered Mat Rush
6x *Microseris lanceolata* - Yam Daisy
4x *Podolepis jaceoides* - Showy Podolepis
4x *Pycnosorus chrysanthus* -Golden Billy Buttons
4x *Stylidium graminifolium* -Grass Trigger Plant
4x *Thysanotus patersonii* - Twining Fringe Lily
4x *Velleia paradoxa* - Spur Vellela
4x *Wahlenbergia stricta* - Tall Blue Bell
6x *Wurmbea dioica* - Early Nancies

Small Shrubs (up to 1m.)
2x *Acacia acinacea* - Gold Dust Wattle
2x *Baeckea ramosissima* - Rosy Heath-myrtle
2x *Hybanthus floribundus* - Shrub Violet
2x *Tetratheca ciliata* - Pink Bells

Shrubs 1m. to 4m.
2x *Acacia aspera* - Rough Wattle
2x *Acacia brachybotrya* - Grey Mulga
2x *Acacia genistifolia* - Spreading Wattle
2x *Acacia lanigera* - Woolly Wattle
2x *Acacia montana* - Mallee Wattle
2x *Acacia pycnantha* - Golden Wattle
2x *Acacia williamsonii* - Whirrakee Wattle
3x *Allocasuarina muelleriana* - Slaty She Oak
4x *Bursaria spinosa* - Sweet Bursaria
2x *Calytrix tetragona* - Common Fringe Myrtle
2x *Cassinia arcuata* - Chinese Scrub
2x *Cassinia uncata* - Sticky Cassinia
2x *Daviesia leptophylla* -Narrow Leaf Bitter Pea
2x *Daviesia ulicifolia* - Gorse Bitter Pea
2x *Dillwynia ramosissima* - Bushy Parrot Pea
2x *Dodonaea viscosa* - Hop Bush
2x *Goodenia varia* - Sticky Goodenia
2x *Grevillea alpina* - Cat's Claw
2x *Hakea decurrens* ssp. *physocarpa* - Bushy Needlewood
2x *Indigofera australis* - Indigofera
2x *Leptospermum myrsinoides* - Heath Tea Tree
2x *Melaleuca decussata* - Totem Poles
2x *Melaleuca uncinata* - Broom Honey Myrtle
2x *Melaleuca wilsonii* - Violet Honey Myrtle
2x *Olearia teretifolia* - Cypress Daisy Bush
2x *Ozothamnus obcordatus* - Grey Everlasting
2x *Pomaderris paniculosa* ssp. *paniculosa* - Inland Pomaderris
2x *Prostanthera denticulata* - Rough Mint Bush
2x *Westringia crassifolia* - Whipstick Westringia

Trees
2x *Santalum acuminatum* - Sweet Quandong

Next Garden Working Bee will be on Sunday 27th August, 2000 at 9am

This working bee will be to prepare the garden for the ' Spring in the Bendigo Bush' Wildflower Show which will be on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd September 2000.

VFNCA Spring 2000 Camp Out

October 12th to October 15th

Based at Kismet Riverside Lodge, Corowa Road, Howlong N.S.W.

Host : Albury Wodonga Field Naturalists Club.

The program for outings and talks will include:

Nail Can Hill Reserve and Monument Hill Parklands which surrounds Albury on its western edge.
The open forest country is dominated by Red Box, Red Stringybark and Red Gum, it has a rich variety of birdlife and vegetation with 43 species of native orchids that have so far been identified.

Bonegilla Native Grasslands contains one of the best "species-rich" examples of Plains Grassy Woodland in NE Victoria. The 5 ha Kangaroo Grass dominated Reserve supports over 100 species including spectacular spring wildflower displays of lilies, orchids and daisies and several rare or threatened species. It also provides important habitat for the Olive Legless Lizard and Large Striped Skink.

Wonga Wetlands and Kremur Street Ponds. Dominated by River Red Gums and situated on the Murray River floodplain just west of Albury, these two wetland systems support abundant and diverse waterbird communities. The Wonga Wetlands, since being flooded 3 years ago, are increasingly supporting uncommon waterbird species. The hydrology of these seven lagoons is relatively natural because the area mostly dries out in summer when the pine and eucalypt plantations require irrigation. The Kremur Street Ponds are well established and consistently provide superb waterfowl viewing.

Lower Ovens River, Peechelba. (led by Ian Davidson of Greening Australia). This is the most intact lowland inland river left in Victoria (probably southern Australia). It is the only major river with little regulation; it contains the most intact native fisheries in Victoria and in places there also remains intact native bank vegetation with a very diverse flora and fauna.

Ian Davison will also give an evening talk on our **disappearing woodland birds of the sheep/wheat belt area.**

Chiltern Box Ironbark National Park (4 320 ha). Situated north and south of the Hume Freeway on the eastern side of Chiltern, the National Park protects several historic gold mining sites and has a high conservation value, the Box Ironbark Forest is the most significant remnant in north-east of Victoria. Trees on higher rocky areas are stunted Blakeley's Red Gum, Red Box and White Box,while lower areas have Grey Box, Red Stringybark and Red Ironbark. Spring Wildflowers include various lilies, orchids, wattles and bush peas. Over 200 species of birds including Turquoise Parrot and Regent Honeyeater have been recorded in the park, Eastern Grey Kangaroos, Tuans, Antechinus, Gliders (Squirrel, Sugar and Feathertail), Common Brushtail and Ringtail Possums are also present.

Mt Pilot Multi-Purpose Park
Between Chiltern and Beechworth, Mt Pilot rises from the dry sclerophyll forest to 540 m, giving views over the Murray Plains. On its western side Yeddonba Aboriginal Culture Walk goes past the remaining rock art. Also the home of Barking Owls and Eagles—we shall be checking their roost and nest sites.

"Why We Need Floods"! A multimedia evening presentation by Mike Copeland dealing with the needs for "floods" to maintain the ecosystems in the River Murray, its floodplain and its billabongs. River regulation, to provide water for irrigation, has meant that we have become very good at managing the flow of water down the Murray Valley, but at what cost to the billabongs?

Kentucky State Forest. A remnant of White Cypress Pine *Callitris glaucophylla* and Buloke *Allocasuarina leuhmannii* woodland. This type of woodland has been destroyed to a greater extent than even the Box Ironbark woodland. This remnant shows damage from activities such as quarrying and grazing. A variety of other trees, shrubs and wildflowers are present and the birdlife includes Grey-crowned and White-browed Babblers, Apostlebirds, Choughs, Common Bronzewings, Diamond and Peaceful Doves, Western Gerygone, Red-capped and Hooded Robins.

ALBURY - WODONGA FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB Inc.

Address all correspondence to:
VFNCA Campout,
464 Mott Street, Albury, NSW 2640
Enquiries Phone: 0260 401090, 0260 215313, 0260 212097.

V.F.N.C.A. CAMPOUT 12TH - 15TH OCTOBER 2000
ALBURY WODONGA AREA

REGISTRATION FORM

Full Payment by 15th September. Cheques payable to "Albury-Wodonga Field Naturalists Club-Campout 2000".

Thursday 12TH October 4 pm – Registration/Check-in – Kismet Riverside Retreat 7.30 pm – Welcome and supper.	No Charge ☐	
Friday 13th October 8.00 am - Check-in - Kismet Riverside Retreat 8.30 am - Wonga Wetlands/Kremur St. ponds ☐ or - Nail Can Hill/Bonegilla grasslands ☐ 2.00 pm - Oven's River ☐ 7.30 pm - Evening Meal - BBQ - BYO drinks. - Evening Talk – Ian Davidson "Declining Woodland Birds".	B/Fast Hot $8.00 ☐ Continental $5.50 ☐ Lunch $5.00 ☐ BBQ $15.00 ☐	$
Saturday 14th 9.00 am - Chiltern Box-Ironbark National Park ☐ and - Mt Pilot Multi-Purpose Park ☐ 5.30 pm - VFNCA General Meeting 7.30 pm - Dinner - BYO drinks. - Evening Talk – Mike Copland, Co-operative Research Centre for Freshwater Ecology "Why we need floods".	B/Fast Hot $8.00 ☐ Continental $5.50 ☐ Lunch $5.00 ☐ Dinner $15.00 ☐	$
Sunday 15th October 9.00 am - Kentucky State Forest ☐ 12.30 pm - Lunch and Farewell	B/Fast Hot $8.00 ☐ Continental $5.50 ☐ Lunch $5.00 ☐	$
REGISTRATION AND INSURANCE		$ 16.00
	SUB TOTAL	
	Plus 10% GST	$
	TOTAL	$

MEALS: Breakfast - Continental – Juice, cereal, toast, Tea/Coffee.
- Hot Buffet, - Juice, cereal, bacon, eggs, sausages, tomato, Tea/Coffee.

Lunch - Packed each day - Rolls/sandwiches, cake/biscuits and a piece of fruit and BYO Thermos.
BBQ - 2 meats, 3 fresh salads, bread roll, 2 desserts, Tea/Coffee
Dinner - Roast, 4 vegetables, 2 desserts (Alternate serve) Tea/Coffee.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

TELEPHONE: _____

CLUB NAME: _____

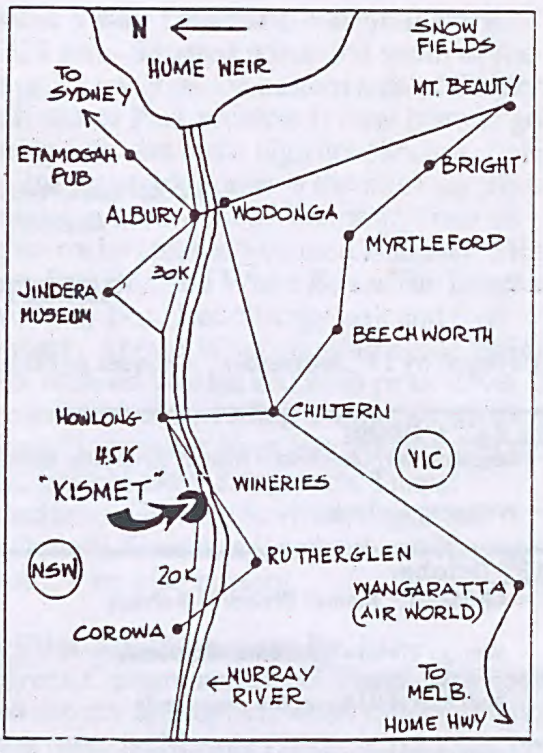
Accommodation Guide
This year's Camp out will be based at Kismet Riverside Retreat at Howlong, 35 km west of Albury on the north bank of the Murray River (in New South Wales), see map in July *Whirrakee.*

A blanket booking has been made for accommodation at Kismet and it is hoped most members will be accommodated here from where our activities and evening functions will be based. Inquiries on facilities and bookings should be directed to Kismet.

Kismet Riverside Retreat is a spacious and tranquil location on the Murray River with 35 acres, plus access to State Forest. It has functional Conference/Reception/Centre ideal for gatherings and workshops with a variety of on-site accommodation. Camping tent sites, caravan powered sites, en-suited power sites, 12 unit motel, cottage, older 4 bed House, plus 10 self-contained cabins. Facilities include a pool, tennis court, boat ramp, ideal for fishing, water skiing, swimming, bike riding, bushwalking and bird watching.

Prices: (GST still to be added to these)
Camping tent sites w/o power $5 pp per day
Caravan tent sites with power $8 pp or $15 dbl per day
En-suited powered sites (4) $18 per day dbl per day
Motel Units (12) $50 twin per day $10 extra person
Cottage sleeps 4 $50 twin per day $10 extra person
Old House 4 bedroom sleeps 13 $15 ppday
Cabins (sleeps 2–4) $60 twin per day $10 extra person
Amenities 3 showers, 3 toilets male/female, 1 disabled shower/toilet, 1 laundry

Inquiries including alternative accommodation options in Corowa, Rutherglen.
Albury/Wodonga - Contact:
Glenda Datson 0260 401090 or fax 0260 406242 email datson@albury.net.au
Neil Blair 0260 235964 (w) 0260 212097 (h), 0260 235965 (fax), email nblair@neilblair.com.au



Some Notes on Genus *Araucaria*

Author: Hal Moors

On a recent excursion to Castlemaine we inspected a fine specimen of the Monkey Puzzle, *A. imbricarta*, the species from Chile which grows to 30 metres. An exotic, but not uncommon in large gardens of the Victorian era.

Several species are Australian: *A. bidwillii,* the Bunya Bunya Tree growing to 40-45 metres, is from Queensland as is *A. cunninghamii*, the Moreton Bay pine (also called hoop pine), growing to about 30 metres; *A. excelsa,* Norfolk Island Pine, and its varieties 'glauca', 'goldiana' & 'robusta' are commonly seen in seaside localities (e g Torquay).

During a tropical cyclone in 1970 many hoop pine trees were snapped off by the force of the storm as one would break a carrot.

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Speaker Syllabus for General Meetings – Second Wednesday 7:30 pm

Date – 2000	Topic	Speaker
9 August	Note change of title: **Central Asia - Silk, Lapis-Lazuli, Horses and Hoopoes -**	**Lawrie Conole** 3 Gezireh Street, Pascoe Vale South Victoria 3044
13 September	**President's Address at Annual General Meeting**	**Rodney Orr**
11 October	**Soils of Bendigo**	**Nathalie Baxter** Land Evaluation Officer Centre foe Land Protection P.O. Box 3100, Bendigo Mail Centre. 3554
8 November		To be announced
13 December	**Christmas Dinner**	No speaker this month

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Mammal Survey Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meeting

Wednesday, August 9, 7:30
Lawrie Conole, our speaker this month has just returned from a trip to Central Asia and would like to tell us about this fascinating part of the world. Although originally titled differently, the talk now will be about: **"CENTRAL ASIA - SILK, LAPIS-LAZULI, HORSES AND HOOPOES"**- This will be a short trip through the region's long and colourful history of conquests including Alexander the Great, Chingis Khan and Amir Timur, its flowering of Islamic art and science, through to present environmental problems, and a brief run down on its ecosystems and biota.
All welcome.

Bird Observers Group

July 2–	Huntley area – Wellsford State Forest.
August 6–	Sedgwick State Forest/Swift Parrot Survey.
September 3–	Bullock Creek/East Loddon Area
October 1–	Loddon River/Serpentine Area.
November (date to to be confirmed)–	Tang Tang Wildlife Reserve.
December 3–	Marong State Forest.

Atlassing Excursions are conducted on the first Sunday of every month.
Meet 9am at the Clubroom, this is a half-day excursion.
Please contact Anne Bridley (ph. 54 493479) if attending.

Supper

The usual arrangements for supper are as follows: members either bring a plate or pay $1 for supper. This small amount is used to reimburse members who purchase essential supper supplies.

Other Events

Next Garden Working Bee will be on Sunday 27th August, 2000 at 9am.

This working Bee will be to prepare the garden for the 'Spring in the Bendigo Bush' Wildflower Show which will be on Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd September, 2000.

Advance Notice

VFNCA Spring 2000 Camp Out

Based at Kismet Riverside Lodge, Howlong October 12th to October 15th

Host : Albury Wodonga Field Naturalists Club.

For a program of outings and talks as well as contact information, see pages 11-13.

Threatened Bird Network, Volunteer Activities
Regent Honeyeater and Swift Parrot Searches.

August 5/6
Contact: Simon Kennedy, phone 5430 4357.

Grey-crowned Babbler Tree Planting at Violet Town and Euroa in July - August
Contact: Birds Australia, phone 98822622

For other activities with threatened birds contact Birds Australia or consult the Club's copy of *Volunteer*, newsletter of the threatened bird network.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.

W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals.
It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Natural Resources and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 35643.